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AUTHOR Nicholson, Georgia
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ABSTRACT

Intended for parents, the handbook describes characteristics of learning disabled (LD) children and offers activities that the child can perform in the home to build skill proficiency. It is explained that the activities are designed to relieve the parent and child of constant awareness of the disability, to avoid use of special materials and equipment, and to provide opportunities for the entire family to enjoy one another. Described are characteristics of children having problems with perception, concept formation, language, emotional control, motor coordination, hyperactivity/distractibility, and memory. Recommended are kitchen activities such as rolling pastry, and slicing vegetables to build fine motor coordination, learning meaning of words for improvement of language development, following a simple recipe to learn order and sequence, naming yellow vegetables to achieve categorization, and naming all circle-shaped objects to develop form perception. Activities for other parts of the house and outside are given such as dusting to improve visual skills, carrying packages to the post office to improve gross motor skills, folding laundry for eye hand coordination, and guessing who is calling when answering the telephone to improve auditory skills. Stressed for importance of enjoyment and skill building are games such as Scrabble, which develop memory. (MC)

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HANDBOOK OF FAMILY ACTIVITIES

FOR PARENTS OF LEARNING DISABLED CHILDREN

Prepared by
Georgia Nicholson,
Psychological Educational Coordinator

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Mel Kelly, Director
Bristol Public Schools
Bristol, Tennessee 37620

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PREFACE

The idea for this booklet was sparked by an article written by Margaret Golick of the Learning Centre, at the Children's Hospital in Montreal, Canada several years ago. Further inspiration came from the strong desire and sincere interest of parents with learning disabled (LD) children to provide their children with remedial activities in order to aid in the amelioration of their specific deficit or deficits.

It is neither easy nor always possible to consistently coordinate and carry out within the home the program that has been specifically designed by educators to be implemented for a learning disabled child within the school setting. Furthermore, adding the role of tutor to the parent's responsibilities, considerable as they already are, is less than desirable. Rarely can a parent sit through a study session with his LD child without feeling some impatience, some discouragement and some exasperation at the very slow and at times, imperceptible rate of progress which the child is making. No matter how consciously the parent may try to keep these feelings from the child it is virtually impossible to avoid conveying them to him. The child, too, finds himself in a very uncomfortable position for he wants to please the parent and he knows that success is one of the most effective ways of doing this. Yet in working with the parent on his particular weakness or weaknesses, all he can succeed in doing is to expose his inadequacies. What a painful assignment this is to any child, much less the LD child who is all too aware of his deficits and who faces them daily in school. One asks why the child should have to face them again at home. The enclosed home activities are a part of family life, require no special materials or equipment and can be carried out relatively free of tension and with no loss of self-esteem. Some might even provide the opportunity for the entire family to be together and to enjoy each other. Parents and children know how special these occasions can be.

ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS FOR PARENTS WHOSE CHILD HAS BEEN DIAGNOSED AS HAVING A LEARNING DISABILITY (LD)

Much has been written about children with learning disabilities so this handbook will only briefly review what information is currently available. The emphasis, instead, will be on what parents of LD children can do at home to help them with their specific deficits.

Extensive research has been conducted, especially during the past decade, and further studies are continuing in an effort to amass information about the child with learning disabilities. Educators and parents have wanted and have needed to know more about how this child relates to his environment, how this child learns and what teaching techniques are the most effective with him. From the body of knowledge that is being gathered, some generalizations have been made. It can be said that the child with learning disabilities is one who demonstrates a discrepancy between expected and actual achievement in one or more areas, such as spoken or written language, mathematics, and spatial orientation. Such a child is not mentally retarded, does not have a physical or sensory (blind, partially sighted, deaf or hard of hearing) handicap. Also, he does not have a primary emotional disturbance. He may, however, exhibit behavior problems in the classroom. If his disability is not properly diagnosed and attended to, he may, in time, develop emotional problems because of the frustration and failure he is likely to experience in school. He has difficulty learning from the traditional group instruction methods and usually needs specialized and individualized techniques to learn the basic skill or skills in which he is deficient.

Few other generalizations can be made about learning disabled children because they have very different patterns of abilities. Some are overactive while some are lethargic; others are clumsy and uncoordinated while others are graceful and athletic; some are inefficient with their eyes while others learn best through their visual sense. There are other LD children who have difficulty attending, understanding and/or remembering what is being said while others learn best through the auditory channel. No two LD children are exactly alike but they might exhibit in varying degrees one or more problems that fall in the following categories:

1. Problems with perception
2. Problems with concept formation
3. Problems with language
4. Problems with emotional control
5. Problems with motor coordination
6. Problems of hyperactivity and distractibility
7. Problems with memory

One of the most obvious and disturbing characteristics to parents and teachers of some LD children is hyperactivity. A hyperactive or hyperkinetic child is one who is almost always in motion. As an infant, such a child was restless, overreacted to stimulation and slept lightly and irregularly. As a toddler, the hyperactive child resisted restraints and engaged in constant exploratory behavior. He seldom persisted at any one activity for any length of time.

In school this type of child is likely to engage in much restless motor activity such as shuffling his feet, tapping with his pencil, squirming in his seat, getting up to adjust his clothing, moving about the room and, in general, disrupting those about him. Although the hyperactivity tends to diminish as a child approaches adolescence, this is not true of all hyperactive youngsters. Some pediatricians have prescribed medication for the reduction of hyperactivity and the results have been reasonably successful.

Closely related to hyperactivity are distractibility and impulsiveness. A child who is easily distracted is one who cannot screen out irrevelant stimuli. For a child who is visually distractible, all the objects and bright colors in a room will compete for his attention and he will feel pulled by all of them. Going to the pencil sharpener for such a child is a time-consuming event. He may stop to examine a neighbor's book, then look at a new game on the shelf, look out the window, spot a new wall chart which he feels he must examine, study the clock, etc., and by the time he gets to the pencil sharpener---if he gets there, he may wonder why he is there. A child who is auditorily distractible will feel impelled to attend to all the sounds in a room even though they are unrelated to what he is supposed to be doing. Such a child will hear a pin fall to the floor whereas most of the others will not.

The impulsive LD child is one who cannot delay his actions. He will speak out of turn; instead of lining up with the class for a drink of water, he will run to the fountain. He seems unable to exercise control over his actions and must rely on firm outer controls, unlike the excited, enthusiastic child who can comply to a request for constraint.

Impulsivity is part of the pattern of emotional instability that is sometimes characteristic of the LD child. His behavior, as well as his academic achievement, may fluctuate from day to day, sometimes within the day. The child cannot cope with the emotional stresses of life as other children can and he is apt to overreact to such experiences as out-of-town trips, parties, special events or unanticipated changes in the daily routine. Each and all of these experiences are emotionally charged and the LD child may be overexcited by them. A calm adult who will take the time to verbalize each step the child will take in the new experience and who can provide him with reassurance can help to minimize the overexcitability. Changing weather can have a greater effect on the LD child than on most others.

Frustration, delay, failure and disappointment may quickly reduce an LD child to tears and/or temper tantrums. It is important that the adult (parent, teacher, relative) know the child's frustration-tolerance level and his skill level, so that frustration build-up will not occur. Working at an assignment or playing a game that is too difficult for the child will result in an (unnecessary) upset for the child and for the adult. Do not continue the task; rather, go on to another activity at which the child can perform satisfactorily.

The above characteristics affect the child's adjustment to his environment. The following characteristics have specific and direct implication for education. They include perceptual difficulties, motor incoordination, language problems, disorders of concept formation and reasoning, and memory problems.

Visual perceptual difficulties may reveal themselves in various ways; this, despite the fact that the child's vision may test 20/20. The child may have difficulty attending to details so that he may see an e as an o or an h as a k. He may not discriminate between sizes ahd shapes-------a circle may appear the same as an oval, a square as a rectangle. Another child may be unable to recognize a letter or word he learned in simple block print if it is presented to him in a different style (Old English, Modern, etc.).

For some LD children visual images are not always steady; letters might be seen right side up one time and inverted the next time. Others tend to reverse letters (b seen as d, g as p, etc.) and/or words (was as saw, on as no) while others have difficulty keeping their place on a page, their eyes being distracted by all the words on the page. Such

youngsters tend to see a sea of words and seemingly cannot separate and attend to one or several words (foreground-background problem). One or several of the above visual perceptual problems can retard the development of skills fundamental to reading.

Difficulty with perception of space and spatial relationships may not have as direct an affect on basic skill acquisition as the problems mentioned above but it can affect a child's understanding of and movement through space (his environment). He may not understand which object is nearer, which one is farther away, what is in front of him and what is to the side of him. A child's bodily movements can betray his problems with space perception for he may underreach or overreach, step too high or not high enough while ascending stairs; the result might be either scuffed shoes, stubbed toes or a fall. Because he may be inaccurate in judging space as well as his own bodily size, he may try to pass through an opening that is much too narrow, and he may bump into objects because he misjudged their position in space. As a result of such problems, many of these children are not invited to participate in group games and this exclusion leads to feelings of inadequacy, of rejection, and of isolation.

The academic effect that poor space perception has may sometimes be seen in arithmetic. Such children have trouble grouping, counting and sorting items (objects in space). The development of number concepts is a slower process for these children.

An LD child may have motor coordination problems which may be manifested in awkward gross motor movements (as seen in running, climbing) inability to maintain balance (as seen in learning to ride a bike, to ice skate). Conversely, an LD child may be quite well-coordinated in his large muscle movements but may have difficulty with fine motor movements. Learning to color neatly, to cut, to paste, to write may be quite difficult and less than pleasurable for the LD child with a fine motor control problem. This is the child who in school is frequently told his papers are "not neat", his drawings "messy" and his writing "illegible".

Language problems are not uncommon in youngsters with learning disabilities. Language may be slow in developing; the child may not have started speaking until three or four years of age. Or when he began to speak, he had an articulation problem or a problem with syntax (the order of words in sentences being unusual, frequently incorrect).

Just as one LD child may have visual discrimination problems, another LD child may have auditory discrimination problems. Dissimilar sounds may be heard as similar sounds (boat may sound the same as bolt, table as cable) and this could lead to considerable confusion for the child. Oral instructions might be quite unclear for such a child.

In addition to the auditory discrimination problem, some LD children are easily distracted by noise. Needless to say, a house filled with the sounds of TV, radio, phonograph, a practicing musician, children playing, adults talking will not be the kind of environment such a child will be able to study in. He needs a quiet room, free of sound distractions. Some classrooms provide "quiet corners" for these children to work in.

Some LD children do not recognize differences between words (to, too, two) and the differences in the meaning and usage of words (a word as a noun and as a verb -- "The fly is flying away"). The nuances of the language and an occasional play on words tend to confuse rather than delight the child with this particular problem. English grammar is apt to be disliked by some LD children.

Concept formation is another troublesome area. The LD child with such a problem may be unable to see relationships between ideas, to judge the relevance of associations or to generalize from facts. Categorizing is difficult because such a youngster may not

recognize what one object or idea may have in common with another. This youngster might be able to tell you how summer and winter are different but not how they are alike. He may not realize that the category of transportation would include such items as car, bicycle, airplane. Attempting to deal with the concepts of time, of mathematics, of science, etc., can be especially agonizing for a child who can best deal with the concrete and obvious aspects of life. Some subject areas in school can pose serious problems for a child who cannot deal with the abstract.

The last problem area to be discussed is that of memory. Some LD children may have weak auditory memories (cannot remember much of what they hear) and/or weak visual memories (cannot remember much of what they see). Such children need frequent review in order to retain the information they have been exposed to in school. Due to weak memory, such children may seem inattentive to the teacher or to the parent and sometimes they are scolded for this when in fact they have been trying very hard to attend and to keep up with the class. If a child is orally instructed to carry out 4 steps of an assignment and he can recall only 2, he may be considered "lazy", "bored", "uninterested", etc.; ill feelings may result on both sides because the child was misunderstood. The same misunderstanding can occur at home. For example, if the child is told to go to the hamper, empty it, take the clothes to the laundry room, sort them into light and colored piles and put one load into the washing machine, but he can only remember the first 2 steps of mother's directions, you can imagine the rest of the scene. In some instances, mother becomes irritated, thinking that the youngster wants to avoid the assignment, does the job herself, complains to father who might have harsh words for the youngster (mother may have preceeded him with some of her own). In the meantime, the child is upset because of the misunderstanding and the unfairness of it all; he merely had not remembered everything that mother had directed him to do. Had the assignment been shortened, everyone would have been spared the ill feelings that resulted from not knowing of the youngster's auditory memory problem.

The above sketch of learning disabilities and the varying patterns that can emerge was presented to acquaint parents with some of the problems such a child most likely will face in school. The school should be able to provide corrective measures to assist the LD child in his efforts to learn. Much remedial work can be done at home which can compliment what is done at school. This does not mean that parents should help with homework or with training exercises. These activities should remain within the academic setting. What the parents can do is to provide the opportunity to the child to engage in the life of the household. This means teaching the child the skills necessary to the efficient functioning of a household. While the child is learning these skills, he can, at the same time, be working on the LD deficit(s).

Teaching a child, especially one with a learning disability, some of the home skills requires time and patience. Mothers know that they can get the work done faster by themselves but helping a youngster to acquire life skills is one of the parental responsibilities.

The best educational training place within the home is the kitchen. Adults and children tend to gravitate there and the association is usually one of food and warm fellowship.

If the child has a fine motor coordination problem, the kitchen can provide him with activities that will help him to develop more flexible finger movements. In addition, the opportunities are there for him to learn a range of hand movements. Rolling out pastry dough with a rolling pin is a good two-handed activity and using cookie cutters not only helps the child to use finer motor movements but also helps him to see and to become aware of the various shapes (circles, stars, squares) as well as to learn to make maximal use of the dough (organization of space).

The variety of movements involved in the following activities is of considerable benefit to a child with poor eye-hand coordination: peeling potatoes and carrots with a potato peeler and then slicing them or cubing them, hulling strawberries, snapping beans, dicing celery, shelling nuts, beating eggs with a fork, beating them with an egg beater, stirring with a spoon, getting pickles and olives out of jars, grating cheese, peeling oranges and grapefruit, slicing tomatoes, tearing lettuce, pouring liquids. The latter suggestion may be met by opposition by parents whose children end up pouring more milk or juice on the floor than in the glass. In such instances, starting with the "pouring" of food rather than liquids and gradually building up to liquids is suggested. "Pouring" rice, noodles, corn, beans and peas from the cooking pan into the serving dish should be attempted first. When this is done satisfactorily, have the youngster pour gravy, maple syrup, honey and puddings into appropriate containers. Thick soups should be attempted next, followed by liquids-----milk, juice, water, consumme.

Language development can be easily fostered in the kitchen. Learning the word for what one is actually doing is excellent experience. The child can see and feel what hulling is, what dicing, cubing, slicing, quartering, chopping, grating, peeling, stirring, and beating are.

The child can best learn in the kitchen the meaning of hard, soft, greasy, sticky, lumpy, smooth, liquid, thick, powder, hot, lukewarm, cool, cold, frozen. His visual perception and auditory perception can be heightened by certain activities in the kitchen. Teach him the difference between simmering and boiling by watching the size of the bubbles and listening to the sound made by them. Have the child listen to the boiling tea kettle and watch the steam leaving the spout. Have him listen to, watch and smell the perking of coffee.

Other senses can be used to teach the meaning of words in the kitchen. The sense of taste is effective in teaching the difference between sweet, sour, tart, syrupy, salty, bitter, semisweet, rancid. Playing guessing games in the kitchen can help the child use his different senses more effectively. To use his sense of smell, ask him---without looking---if the coffee has perked, what is baking in the oven, what is frying, boiling? To sharpen the sense of taste, have the child taste something (such as a condiment, sauce, salad dressing, piece of meat, fish, etc.) and identify it while keeping his eyes closed.

Teaching the importance of order and sequence can also be done in the kitchen. Asking the child to prepare a simple recipe will quickly impress upon him the need to carefully follow each step in the listed directions. Failure to do so may result in less than satisfactory results. He will soon understand the need to organize and to have ready the necessary ingredients. Start the youngster off on something simple like preparing a tossed salad or the instant puddings and gelatins, the slice and bake cookies, and the simple cake mixes so that the project can be easily and quickly done and can be enjoyed within a short period of time.

Although traditionally girls have spent more time in the kitchen than boys, boys should be included in kitchen life. They, too, should have the opportunity to learn to cook, to prepare breakfast, to pack lunches or picnic baskets. Just think what eye-hand control can be learned from shelling hard-boiled eggs, slicing them, deviling the yolks and then spreading the mixture; of the coordination that can be developed in learning to make sandwiches---spreading jelly and peanut butter or liverwurst and not getting past the crusts and of the shape perception that can be encouraged by cutting the square slices of bread either lengthwise (to get rectangles) or diagonally (to get triangles).

While in the kitchen, the game of categorization can be played. If the child is peeling potatoes or washing vegetables or fruit, name all the yellow or green vegetables known to each of you, or all the fruit, meat, sea food, desserts, poultry and game, etc. When the table is being set, name the different pieces of dinnerware, flatware and glassware.

Form perception can be heightened by naming all the circle-shaped objects in the kitchen (dishes, clock face, rim of cup, etc.), all the square-shaped or rectangularly-shaped objects. Directional-awareness can be developed by naming what is in front of the refrigerator, what is to the left of the stove, to the right of the dishwasher, above the sink, on top of the table, under the chair, what is mother (or someone else) standing in front of or next to. If one faces the door and turns left, what room will he be moving toward; if he turns right, will he be headed for another room? Which one?

We could continue in the kitchen but other rooms can provide additional learning experiences. To improve visual skills and to increase one's attention to details and to order, the following could be done:

1. Show the child the placement of various objects (ashtrays, art objects, books, plants, toss pillows, waste paper baskets, etc.) in a room and ask him to tidy it up when it appears to be in disarray. This will help him learn to spot what is out of order.

2. Have your child dust what needs to be dusted; the first time tell him what he should dust; after that, have him look for items to be dusted. For the latter, he may need some prompting!

3. Encourage hobbies such as collections -- stamp, coin, flower, leaf, rock, shell. Such collecting will help the child look for differences in shape, size, color, and detail. Learning the names, the places where found and when, and their value (intrinsic as well as extrinsic) can be highly educational.

4. Take your youngster to the supermarket or to the drugstore and assign him the responsibility for getting certain items. If he cannot read, have him look for the pictures on the labels or cut out the letters on the labels or print them for him so that he can match them. As you move down the aisles, tell him what items he should look for. If you have a pet, have your child select the food and discuss the differences between canned and dried food and the quantity needed for certain periods of time.

5. Out in the yard or while on a picnic in the park, point out the differences among the flowers, the shrubbery, the trees; look for the ones that bloom in the spring, during the summer or the fall. Have the child point out and name as many different flowers as he is able. While driving through rural areas, have the youngster look for certain trees, flowers, animals, butterflies, and different cloud formations. If your youngster is interested in planes, study them together, point out the differences and then try to spot them in the air.

Gross motor skills can be improved through the following activities: (Some of these will depend on the age and size of the child).

1. Carrying packages to the post office or while on a shopping spree, or carrying bags of groceries; emptying waste paper baskets and carrying the garbage out.

2. Mowing the lawns, raking leaves, digging the earth to plant flowers, bulbs, shrubs, etc., shoveling snow, chopping wood, sweeping the sidewalk and the driveway.

3. Washing and waxing the car, washing windows, mopping and waxing floors, vacuuming floors and carpets.

4. Moving furniture, bringing wood in for the fireplace.

5. Folding the laundry, loading and unloading the dishwasher, making beds.

Eye-hand coordination can be further developed by:

1. Folding the laundry, folding napkins for dinner.

2. Setting the table, washing dishes, drying and putting them away.

3. Icing cupcakes and cakes, arranging relishes or cookies and pastries on a serving dish.

4. Picking up paper and other rubbish from the lawn.

5. Sorting buttons on the basis of size and color; sorting nails, screws and bolts and placing them into jars; sorting paint brushes and arranging them according to size.

6. Winding yarn into balls, readying it for knitting.

7. Helping make holiday decorations, sealing and stamping envelopes for holiday cards.

Strengthening Left-Right discrimination can be accomplished through the following activities:

1. Setting the table.

2. Sorting out mittens and gloves and arranging them in pairs.

3. Organizing the family's boots, slippers and shoes. If the child has difficulty discriminating the left from the right shoe mate, draw an outline of the left and of the right shoe or boot on cardboard or butcher's paper and have him use that as a guide.

Auditory skills can be strengthened by the following activities:

1. Answering telephone calls and trying to determine whose voice it is if it is a familiar one. The child should be helped first to discriminate voices of close relatives and friends and then branch out to the voices of relatives and of friends from whom calls are less frequently received.

2. Listening to the radio for specific information such as the headlines, sports announcements and scores, weather reports, etc. Do not ask your youngster to listen to the TV news because this communication medium utilizes both the visual and auditory senses.

3. Listening to records and being asked to sing the lyrics of a song or to quote parts of a poem or a story he has heard will help improve listening skills. Reading aloud newspaper articles, short stories, poems and discussing them is also effective.

4. Listening to records of bird calls, then going for a walk and listening to and identifying some of the local bird songs.

5. Listening to sounds within the house and trying to determine what and where they are coming from -- listening to the difference (provided there is a difference) between the front and back door bell, determining what cycle the dishwasher is on, whether or not the dryer is still running, etc.

Concept development can be encouraged through the following:

1. Categorizing can be practiced by sorting the laundry -- light and dark colors, clothes to be ironed or folded and put away. Separating the personal items that belong to mother, father and to each sibling will help the youngster become aware of the size difference even though the shape might remain the same.
   Categorizing can also be aided by having the child put away the groceries -- first the items that are to go into the freezer, then those that go into the refrigerator, the canned goods, the paper items, etc. Having him polish the furniture will help him to see what pieces fall into the category of furniture and making the beds will help him become aware of what items are included in the category of bedding.
   Having him organize family snapshots, especially if taken during a vacation, and having him record when and where they were taken.

2. Learning about numbers -- counting, grouping, etc. -- can be aided through the practice of table setting. The child will need to know how many places to set, how many pieces of flatware will be needed, how many dishes and so on. Have him check on who will want dessert (number may vary depending on who is currently dieting) and have him assist in cutting and serving it.
   Using the measuring spoons and the measuring cup, especially when following a recipe, will make the child more aware of parts and of the whole. Feeding a pet will also increase this awareness (measuring 1/2 can, or 2 cups of water for 4 cups of dried food).
   Helping with the grocery shopping will familiarize your child with the quantity of eggs in a dozen, the size of a 2 lb. bag of beans, the heaviness of a 5 lb. bag of potatoes. Playing games such as Bingo, Monopoly, Masterpieces, etc., also increases the child's understanding of numbers and number concepts.
   Making and packing lunches will make him aware of how many sandwiches, bags of chips and number of fruit go into each lunch.
   Having your child keep his own growth chart will help develop a greater awareness of numbers and their relationship to measurement. Snapshots taken at or near the time that the measurements were taken (every 6 months or 12 months) and attached to the chart will make the size differences more graphic as will pictures of his early childhood growth, particularly during his first year of life, with accompanying height and weight figures. Weighing and measuring other members of the family, the

family pet or checking the weights of packaged grocery items will help him to see that the same weight measurement may not always assume the same size measurement.
Measuring the growth of house plants can also have interest and learning value for the child. It is suggested that he start his own plant such as a sweet potato or avocado or work with an ivy or philadendron cutting. He could measure the initial growth and then take measurements every four of five days after that if the plant is growing rapidly or every two weeks if it is growing slowly.

3. Increasing his awareness of time is desirable and essential. This can be done more easily if specific activities are attached to the days of the week such as Friday is the last day of school in the week, Tuesday is the Brownie or Cub Scout meeting day, Saturday morning is when favorite cartoons are seen on TV. Have him try to remember the time, the channel and the day of his favorite TV programs. To emphasize the units of time such as weeks and months, obtain a large calendar on which the youngster can mark off each day of the week, circle the old week, box off a special day or holiday. The visual impact of the calendar with the child's markings will make a more lasting impression on the LD child, especially if he is visually oriented. Having his own alarm clock and/or watch will also help him to better understand time.
Discussing the menus for each day of the week, including the weekend, will also develop greater awareness of the number of days in the week. Have your child assist in the planning of what food items need to be purchased, help to determine the quantity needed and where the items should be purchased. Looking for grocery store sales in newspapers will help him develop and understand the idea of comparative shopping; it could also help him strengthen his subtraction skills and could benefit the memory process. Your youngster might assume (with perhaps some encouragement from you) the responsibility of writing the list of needed grocery supplies. If he cannot spell some words, an oral assist from mother could have considerable value in that the youngster would hear the letters in the word, would experience the motor activity of forming the letters and would see them on paper. This could serve as excellent reinforcement for the child.

Outside of the home, additional life experiences await the youngster. Visits to the department stores, to the post office, to the bank offer fine opportunities for parents to discuss and to point out differences and similarities between the services rendered by these different stores and agencies. Encourage the child to verbalize his observations and teach him the vocabulary applicable to the places that were visited. Trips to the zoo, to a dog show, to a museum, to a factory can teach the child a great deal and can stimulate language development provided he is encouraged to talk about his experiences. Teach your youngster how to purchase items such as a loaf of bread, the newspaper, a gift for Dad, etc. Help him to learn how to handle money. Also, help him to gain comfort in asking for assistance when he needs it. Teach him what to do should he get lost in a store or in a different section of town.

To prepare your LD youngster for emergencies, teach him important addresses (the family's, a close relative's, a neighbor's) and important telephone numbers. Be sure that he knows how to dial for help.

We will return to the home for the last suggestion that parents can do to help their LD youngster. That suggestion is the playing of games. The importance of games should

not be underestimated for they can provide the opportunity to learn in an environment of fun and excitement. They also help the child to practi e many things which in game form are more pleasurable than they are in homework. Teaching your youngster how to play games will give him the skills his peers have and will help him to relate to them and to relate at their level. If the LD youngster has poor gross motor skills, knowing how to play table games can help him interact with his peers through this avenue and this will reduce the feeling of inadequacy and the isolation he might experience were he unable to participate in both group sports and table games. As you introduce him to the various games, be sure to teach him the rules of the game, the point of the game and the vocabulary of the game. Play sessions should be brief and should be terminated before the child and the parents become upset, frustrated and/or bored. Keep in mind that the LD child needs considerable practice to develop the skills the games are tapping and the parent will have to exercise ample patience. A few games and types of toys and their particular value to the LD child will be listed but a more extensive list can be found in the book, Toys and Games for Educationally Handicapped Children by Charlotte Buist and Jerome Schulman, M.D., Charles C. Thomas, Publisher.

All card games, puzzles, building blocks, peg boards, dart games, stringing beads, airplane or car models, paint sets, weaving looms, knitting kits, embroidery sets, jewelry craft and leather craft kits help develop finger dexterity and the visual perceptual skills of matching, focusing on relevant details, sorting and grouping. Gross motor skills can be improved by bowling, by playing ping pong, tennis, shuffleboard, junior billiards, baseball, basketball and football.

Memory skills (visual and auditory) can be encouraged by playing Scrabble (Junior and Regular), Go Fish, Arithmetic Quizmo, Bingo. Auditory perception can be further developed by listening to records of country sounds, city sounds, transportation sounds, sounds of instruments. Conceptualization which involves the ability to see and understand new and unusual relationships and the ability for problem-solving can be helped through the playing of such games as Educational Password, Across the Continent, Clue, Monopoly, Checkers and Chess.

Whatever you choose to do with your child, whether it is to cook together, to shop together, to go to the park or to play a game together, the experience can be highly educational, can be filled with fun and can be highly rewarding to both. Parental stimulation and encouragement are exceedingly important to a child, particularly to one who has a learning disability, and when the parent can, in a relaxed atmosphere, instill faith, confidence and the desire to learn in a child who is struggling to learn, he is making a valuable contribution to society--helping a child develop into an emotionally healthy human being while helping him to realize his abilities.